

VZCZCXYZ0017
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMS #1101 3621258
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
R 281257Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1082
INFO RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T MUSCAT 001101

NOFORN
SIPDIS
M/PRI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/12/28
TAGS: [AODE](#) [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [KMRS](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: DOD NSDD-38 Request to Station a Force Protection Unit at
Embassy Muscat

REF: STATE 57245; NSDD 38 CASE NUMBER DOD-NV00-0017-2009

CLASSIFIED BY: Schmierer, Richard, Ambassador, Department of State,
Embassy Muscat; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (S) Summary: In the three months since my arrival at post I have made it a priority to become familiar with the security context and operational environment here in Oman. In this connection, I have visited the Mutrah (Muscat) and Salalah ports and the War Reserve Materiel site at Thumrait Air Base, and have consulted extensively with appropriate USG elements in Oman and Washington, DC, with the subject NSDD-38 request specifically in mind. Based on these activities, observations and consultations, I am confident that Embassy Muscat will be able to continue providing and facilitating appropriate security support for CENTCOM and other DOD visitors and assets in Oman using currently existing USG capabilities in Oman and in the region. For this reason I have decided to decline the subject NSDD-38 request for a DOD Force Protection Detachment to be based at Embassy Muscat. End Summary.

¶2. (S) In the NSDD-38 request and supporting materials which I have been provided concerning the proposal to station a three-person DOD Force Protection Detachment (FPD) at Embassy Muscat, DOD has provided a thoughtful analysis and assessment of the security situation in Oman and the security support needs for visiting / transiting / deployed CENTCOM and other DOD assets in Oman. This NSDD-38 request, which is dated June 3, 2009, arrived at post shortly after the departure of the previous Ambassador, and somewhat over three months before my arrival at post. My need to review the Embassy's operational security capabilities, assess the overall security climate in Oman, and visit key sites around the country related to the NSDD-38 request, resulted in a delay in this mission's response to the request. However, having now undertaken the steps needed to adequately review and assess this request, I am confident that current security circumstances and capabilities - including some which have arisen since the time of the subject NSDD-38 request - obviate the need for the deployment of a DOD FPD to Embassy Muscat.

¶3. (S) Embassy Muscat's Regional Security Office (RSO) has operational oversight and responsibility for the security of personnel and assets present in Oman under Chief of Mission authority. As a corollary to such responsibility, the RSO also assists and coordinates with other USG entities with personnel or assets in Oman which are not under COM authority, including CENTCOM and other elements of the U.S. military. Since the receipt of the NSDD-38 request to deploy a DOD FPD to Muscat, the RSO's American staff has increased by 50% (from 2 FSOs to 3), and has added an additional local-hire staff member as well. In consultations with the RSO on this NSDD-38 request, I have been assured that arrangements currently in place for ensuring security support to DOD personnel and assets located in, and visiting or transiting Oman, are adequate. In addition, I assess that the current and

projected future volume of ship visits and other activities which would generate security support requirements is well within the capabilities of our RSO office, as recently augmented, in coordination with DOD assets in the region.

¶4. (S) An additional factor in evaluating this NSDD-38 request involves the location of the personnel and assets whose security would be the responsibility of the proposed FPD. The great majority of such personnel / assets would be in locations in Oman which are remote from Muscat. Thus, the permanent residence of such a FPD in Muscat would not eliminate the need for remote deployment (currently undertaken from nearby locations outside of Oman, but within the region) to address these security needs.

¶5. (S) A final factor in considering this request is the possibility of unintended or inadvertent effects of the presence of such a FPD in Muscat, such as the possible de facto development of a security double standard between civilian and non-civilian personnel under COM authority, or possible confusion concerning operational security responsibilities between the FPD and the RSO.

¶6. (S) It is on the basis of this background and these considerations that I have decided to decline the NSDD-38 request to deploy a DOD FPD to Muscat.
Schmierer